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 I am here tonight representing Friends of Pine Lake, a
volunteer organization which has fought to protect the plateau
environment since 1998. I want to comment on the evaluation
forms being used in this ECA process because its important to
see WHAT is being proposed and HOW that is being done. The
commission clearly represents the views of property rights
entities, developers, dock builders and those individuals who
want to have the best financial return for their investment.
They have resources and have lobbied hard for what they want.
However, it is important to note that these individuals are, by
far, a minority in the City of Sammamish and some are not even
residents. So let's look at the process from a more objective
point of view.

The main point of the Environmental Critical Areas review is to
evaluate whether existing regulations are working to protect
public resources and, if not, to update them by applying Best
Available Science. First we need to know if the science applied
in 2005 worked. Has the environment been degraded or stayed
the same? Have our salmon populations increased or
decreased? In these forms, we see no evaluation or
consideration of that kind at all.

In fact there has been significant environmental degradation in
Sammamish. Since the last environmental review, there have
been three major landslides in the Ebright Creek Ravine,
something that had not been documented in the previous 35
years. The slides were due to development in the Thompson
Basin and caused considerable damage to private property.
One of these landslides decimated one year's entire salmon
run. On our watch, the native Lake Sammamish Kokanee
Salmon has gone from thriving to the brink of extinction. Local
agencies and private citizens have had to go to significant
lengths and enormous cost to try to save them. But none of
this figures into the evaluations done here. To the contrary,
the Planning Commission is recommending changes to the
Erosion Hazards Overlay which would allow significant
reductions in the regulations protecting overlay zones. Other
changes to the overlay would allow discharges of stormwater
via pipeline straight into Lake Sammamish. Best Available

Science does not support these changes, but that counts for nothing. Because of the ongoing degradation in the Erosion Hazard Overlay, and the failure of regulations to prevent the decline, it is obvious that this regulation needs to be tightened, not loosened.

The process is skewed because, in these evaluation forms, the value of the environment is reduced to one third of the equation. The environment is given equal weight with both property rights and with staff's ease at implementing regulations. Here is an example of what happens when using the evaluation form.

OK. So, this is our environment (supposedly the focus of this process). Something alive and precious, something essential to our lives, and safety, something that everyone agrees has enormous value. But its value is real, unlike this paper. Nonetheless, let's evaluate its value on paper. In the equation being used by the Planning Commission, property rights have equal value with the environment, (so take away one third). Then again, staff implementation, ironically, carries just as much weight as well, (so take away another third). What you have left is the value being placed on the environment by the current process. It counts for less than half of the equation! How can our resources possibly be protected under this scenario? They can't and they aren't.

The Sammamish environment deserves much more consideration and weight in this process. In fact, the environment deserves to have the greatest consideration, not just a fraction. Our earth environment, the land and water is a living thing. We do a great disservice to our resources when we dissect them into parts on paper and then cut way what appears to be insignificant. We lose sight of the value and function of the whole, we serve the interests of a few, and the greater need of our citizens is not served.